

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of temporarily protecting a portion of a surface, which is to be coated with a coating compound which comprises:

a) applying a continuous coating of a masking material to a portion of said surface, which masking material comprises, before drying, an aqueous solution or emulsion consisting essentially of a film-forming, carboxylic acid-containing polymer;

b) ~~coating all or a portion of said surface with a coating compound, said masking material preventing said coating compound from contacting said~~ portion of said surface which is protected by said masking material; and, thereafter,

c) removing said masking material from said surface.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said polymer is an acrylic or methacrylic acid-containing copolymer.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein said acrylic or methacrylic acid containing copolymer is a water soluble copolymer.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said surface is the surface of a motor vehicle.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said masking material comprises ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said masking material comprises sufficient alkali to neutralize and solubilize said polymer.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the pH of said solution or emulsion is about 7.1.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said solution or emulsion has a viscosity of between about 1400 and 1700 c.p.s.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said aqueous solution or emulsion comprises from about 2 to about 10, weight percent, of said polymer.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein said aqueous solution or emulsion comprises about 5 weight percent of said polymer.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of temporarily protecting a portion of a surface which is to be coated with a coating compound which comprises:

a) applying a continuous coating of a masking material to a portion of said surface, which masking material comprises, before drying, an aqueous solution or emulsion comprising, as the sole film-forming component, a carboxylic acid-containing copolymer;

b) ~~coating all or a portion of said surface with a coating compound~~, said masking material preventing said coating compound from contacting said portion of said surface which is protected by said masking material; and, thereafter,

c) removing said masking material from said surface.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein said polymer copolymer is an acrylic or methacrylic acid-containing copolymer.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein said acrylic or methacrylic acid-containing copolymer is a water soluble copolymer.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein said surface is the surface of a motor vehicle.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein said masking material comprises ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid.

16. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein said masking material comprises sufficient alkali to neutralize and solubilize said polymer.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the pH of said solution or emulsion is about 7.1.

18. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein said solution or emulsion has a viscosity of between about 1400 and 1700 c.p.s.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 wherein said aqueous solution or emulsion comprises from about 2 to about 10, weight percent, polymer of said polymer.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19 wherein said aqueous solution or emulsion comprises about 5 weight percent polymer of said copolymer.

21. (Original) A composition for temporarily protecting a surface which comprises an aqueous solution consisting essentially of:

a) from about 2 to about 10, weight percent, of a film-forming acrylic or methacrylic acid copolymer.

b) sufficient alkali to neutralize and solubilize said copolymer, wherein said solution has a viscosity of between about 1400 and 1700 c.p.s.

22. (Original) A composition for temporarily protecting a surface which comprises, as the sole film-forming component, an acrylic or methacrylic acid copolymer, dissolved or emulsified in an aqueous solution, wherein said solution has a viscosity of

between about 1400 and 1700 c.p.s. and further comprises ethylenediaminetetraaceticacid.

23. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said polymer is a copolymer of methacrylic acid and ethylacrylate.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 wherein said polymer copolymer is a copolymer of methacrylic acid and ethylacrylate.

25. (Original) The composition of claim 21 wherein said copolymer is a copolymer of methacrylic.

26. (Original) The composition of claim 22 wherein said copolymer is a copolymer of methacrylic.

27. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein said masking material is removed solely with water.

28. (New) The method of claim 11 wherein said masking material is removed solely with water.